



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Stanislaus National Forest

19777 Greenley Road
Sonora, CA
95370-5909

File Code: 3420

Date: September 3, 1999

Route To:

Subject: Examination of Incense-cedar From Pilot Fire (FPM Report No. C99-2)

To: Tom Atkin; Special Agent, South Central Zone Law Enforcement

On September 2, 1999, I examined an incense-cedar that was removed from near the origin of the Pilot Fire. The cedar had been growing under a high voltage power line at an elevation of 3000 feet. It was removed from the site on the same day as the Pilot Fire began (8/23/99). The purpose of this examination was to determine the condition of the tree both before and after the fire.

OBSERVATIONS:

The incense-cedar was 24 feet tall, 8.7 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH), and 29 years old. A vertical strip of missing bark extended along the entire length of the bole. The missing bark had been blown off the tree and not burned off. There was no callus tissue adjacent to the intact bark. The only portion of the crown that still had green foliage was the upper 3 feet of the bole. I checked the condition of the cambium at numerous locations along the bole, including directly under the strip of missing bark and on lateral branches. In almost all cases, except where the fire had charred the outer wood, there was moist, cream colored sapwood. Examination of the bole, branches and remaining foliage showed no evidence of any insects or pathogens affecting the tree.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. This incense-cedar was alive and healthy before the fire and had green foliage along almost the entire length of the bole.
2. The missing bark condition is consistent with injury from a sudden electrical discharge.
3. Because there was no callus or healing tissue adjacent to the missing bark, this injury could not have occurred prior to the 1999 growing season.
4. Over the life of the tree, the average height growth was about 10 inches per year.

If you have any questions or need more information, please call me at (209) 532-3671 x242.

JOHN PRONOS
Shared Service Area Plant Pathologist

